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Road safety vision 2001

Making Canada's roads
the safest in the world

Annual report 1998



CCMTA • CCATM

CANADIAN COUNCIL OF MOTOR TRANSPORT ADMINISTRATORS
CONSEIL CANADIEN DES ADMINISTRATEURS EN TRANSPORT MOTORISÉ

CCMTA is a non-profit organization comprising representatives of the provincial, territorial and federal governments of Canada which, through the collective consultative process, makes decisions on administration and operational matters dealing with licensing, registration and control of motor vehicle transportation and highway safety.

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Transport Canada Web site at **www.tc.gc.ca** or
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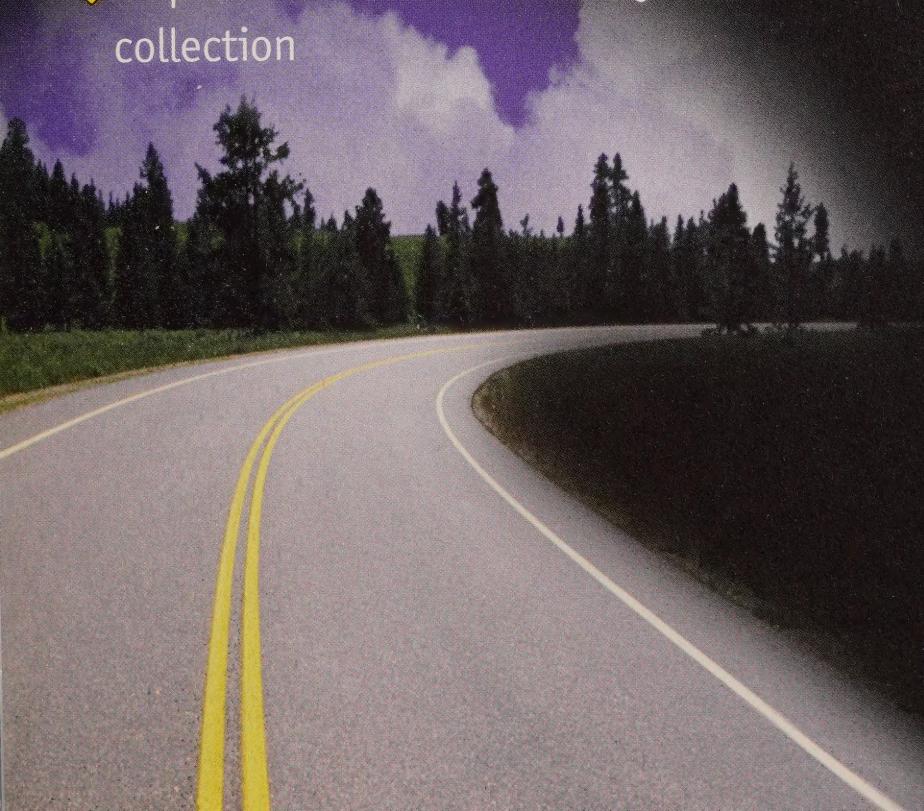
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road safety vision

This vision is about making Canada's roads the safest in the world. It is a national effort supported by all levels of government and key private sector stakeholders.

Road Safety Vision 2001 initiatives aim to:

- ◆ raise public awareness of road safety issues
- ◆ improve communication, cooperation and collaboration among road safety agencies
- ◆ toughen enforcement measures
- ◆ improve national road safety data collection





**Traffic collisions
don't just happen.
There is nothing
"accidental" about them.**



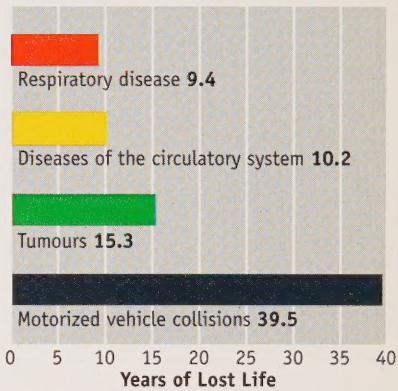
**Medical costs
associated with
traffic collisions are
staggering—as
much as \$25 billion
annually.
It's time to
relieve our health care
system of this
huge drain.**

collisions can be avoided

Traffic collisions don't just happen. There is nothing "accidental" about them. Collisions happen for a reason, and the result for Canadians is a huge social toll of pain, suffering and expense.

The terrible impact of collisions should not be an acceptable cost of modern life. Road Safety Vision 2001 is about helping Canadians see driving in a whole new light. With your help we can eliminate unsafe driving and save lives—very often young lives.

Average Years of Lost Life According to Cause of Death



canadians working together

Road Safety Vision 2001 was adopted by the Canadian Council of Motor Transport Administrators (CCMTA) and officially endorsed by all Ministers of Transportation and Highway Safety in 1996. This commitment to national cooperation reflects how road safety works in Canada: national, provincial and municipal jurisdictions share responsibility for the administration, regulation and control of motor vehicle transportation and highway safety.

The support of all partners in this broad coalition ensures that vision goals cover the three fundamental components of road safety: users, roads and vehicles.

spiraling health costs

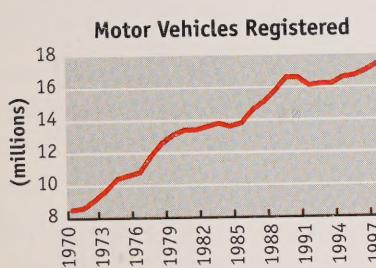
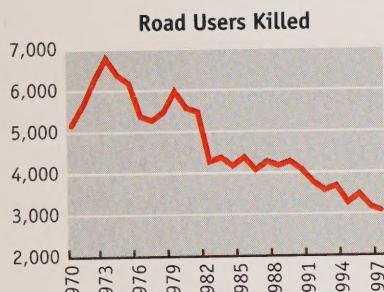
As Canadian jurisdictions work towards realizing the vision, we stand to gain the world's safest roads—and more. More because traffic collisions cause a huge drain on health care resources. At a time when Canadians are facing tough choices about health care funding, we are spending up to \$25 billion annually in emergency care, rehabilitation and other costs resulting from traffic collisions that were largely preventable.

Tragic statistics

More than 600,000 traffic collisions were reported in 1997—over one a minute—resulting in over 200,000 injuries and 3,000 deaths. The cold facts, however, can never relay the untold emotional and physical suffering for individual Canadians.

Road Safety Vision 2001 partners have declared that these tragedies are not an inevitable cost of modern-day living. They want to bring down the toll of death and injury.

Common sense solutions

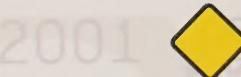
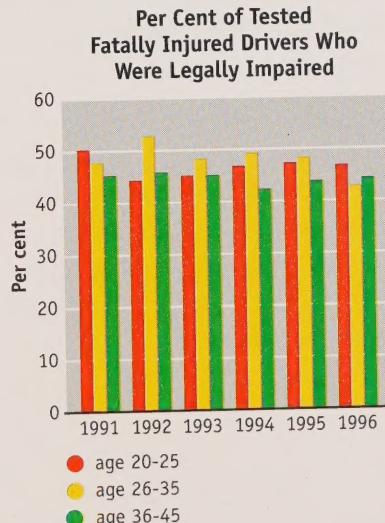


Most traffic collisions can be avoided with common-sense solutions. Alcohol, excessive speed, and riding without seat belts are just some of the everyday causes of serious injury and death on our roads.

In 1996, average blood alcohol levels in over a third of fatally injured drivers were more than twice the legal limit of .08. In Sweden, however, the legal limit for a driver's blood alcohol level is .02 and in Norway it is .05. Both of these countries have better road safety records than Canada.

Excessive speed was a factor in almost a quarter of all fatal, single-vehicle crashes.

A third of all drivers killed were not wearing a seat belt. Three out of every 10 young children killed were not restrained properly in a child safety seat.



There's a traffic collision every minute in Canada; an injury every three minutes; and a death every three hours.



Enough people die every month on our roads to fill a large jet liner.



Speeding, alcohol and not wearing seat belts nor restraining children properly are major contributors to traffic-related deaths.



**Over the past 25 years,
collisions and deaths
on Canadian roads have
been steadily
decreasing; but 3,000
people still die annually.**



**Road travel accounts
for 95 per cent of all
transportation deaths
in Canada annually.**



**Road safety is about
safe roads,
safe vehicles and
safe users.**

Proud of our progress

Despite the harsh statistics, there is cause for optimism. In 1997, less than half the number of people died on Canadian roads as in the early 1970s. This positive trend is all the more significant because the number of drivers and vehicles on the roads has almost doubled over that period.

On some fronts, however, progress has leveled off. Seat belt wearing rates in recent years have steadied at around 90 per cent for passenger vehicles; the percentage of legally impaired fatally injured drivers has hovered in the 40 per cent range. Transportation officials must work together to reach those who continue their unsafe driving practices.

changing individual behaviour

Road safety is built on three pillars: roads, vehicles and users.

All levels of government are uniting to put more focus on the safety aspects of roads in their jurisdictions.

The vehicles on today's roads are much safer than they were a quarter century ago. They perform better in crashes and they are increasingly equipped with safety devices to avoid crashes in the first place.

Road Safety Vision 2001 begs the conclusion: If we can have modern roads and vehicles, surely we can also modernize individual attitudes to road safety.

To take road safety to a new level, high-risk drivers must realize the connection between their personal driving habits and public safety.

canada and the world

Comparing safety records of individual countries is a complex task. A lot depends on the size of the country and distances traveled, traveling habits, numbers of vehicles on the road, and population density.

Fatality Rates per
10,000 Motor Vehicles Registered
(Selected OECD Member Countries 1997)





improving roads, vehicles and public perception of acceptable road-user behaviour.

competing for global leadership

Professionals who adopt and further Road Safety Vision 2001 goals will help improve Canada's position as a world leader in road safety. They face, however, a dual challenge: The first is to improve Canada's road safety performance. The second is to measure these improvements against other countries with ambitious programs of their own.

Sweden has adopted a program called Vision Zero, with a goal that no one be seriously injured or killed in traffic collisions. By 2000, Great Britain aims to reduce traffic casualties by one third. In 1997, Switzerland achieved its lowest fatality figures since World War II. Japan considers it has already achieved its reduced traffic fatality target for the beginning of the 21st century. Australia recorded its lowest level of traffic fatalities per registered vehicle in 1997. The Netherlands aims to halve road deaths, compared to 1986 levels, early in the 21st century. Germany has seen traffic fatalities decrease 24 per cent between 1991 and 1997. In 1996, Finland almost reached its goal to halve the number of traffic fatalities by the end of the 1990s. And the United States is working to increase seat belt use to 90 per cent and decrease alcohol-related driving fatalities by 37 per cent by 2005, compared with 1994.

Based on the number of deaths per registered vehicle, Canada ranks eighth out of the 29 member countries of the Organization for Economic Cooperation and Development (OECD).

One thing can be agreed on: OECD countries with better safety records have also made significant commitments to

In road safety,
Canada ranks eighth
among the world's
29 OECD countries.



Transportation leaders
in the top-ranked countries
keep working to make
their roads safer,
raising the bar for
Canada.





Over the years, most jurisdictions have used public awareness campaigns combined with enforcement to increase seat belt use and decrease drinking and driving.

The results?

- lower national traffic death and injury rates.



More needs to be done to target persistent high-risk drivers who break the law.

integrated priorities

Jurisdictions in Canada are implementing Road Safety Vision 2001 initiatives in the four priority areas outlined on page 1. Many of these initiatives address more than one priority. Activities to increase seat belt usage, for example, require legislation, public education and enforcement efforts to be fully effective.

1. Raising public awareness

The vision can only succeed with public awareness and broad support. Professionals must work continuously to identify high-risk behaviours, draw them to public attention and, of course, target enforcement efforts at offenders.

Restraint Use Among Selected Occupant Casualties (%)

Victim Type	Average 1991-1995 % Belted	1997 % Belted
Killed Drivers	59.5	65.5
Seriously Injured Drivers	81.1	84.6
Killed Children (0-4 yrs.)	65.5	70.7
Seriously Injured Children	73.5	84.3

With the national seat belt wearing rate hovering around 90 per cent, most Canadians understand that safe driving begins with buckling seat belts. But not everyone has got the message. The National Occupant Restraint Program 2001 (NORP) is an example of renewed efforts to combine education with enforcement to get 95 per cent of the population to wear a seat belt and properly restrain children in vehicles by 2001. Under NORP, police forces across the country take part in Operation Impact to target high-risk drivers who do not buckle up and who ignore speed limits or traffic lights.

Other public awareness campaigns target issues such as winter driving and school bus safety.

Several jurisdictions are introducing or considering graduated licensing for novice drivers. Those with programs in place can point to success, as collision rates for novice drivers have fallen by as much as 31 per cent and fatalities by 28 per cent.

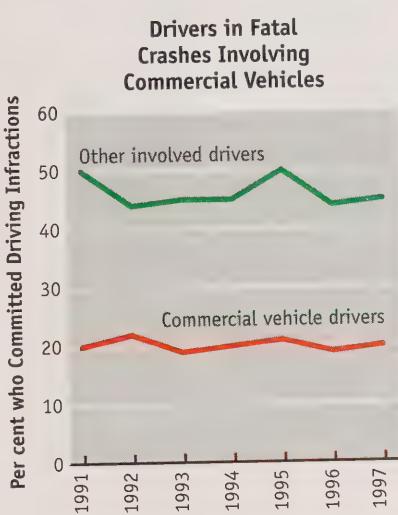
2. Enhancing communication, cooperation and collaboration

A number of programs encourage sharing information and expertise among road safety agencies. Transport Canada's national perspective is helping to increase this flow of ideas. For example, the department is involved in a national effort on the proper use of child restraints. Transport Canada has also developed a "stakeholders' database" on its Web site, where information and links are available on other road safety organizations.

The National Safety Code (NSC) provides a comprehensive set of standards for commercial trucks and buses. Commercial vehicle collisions account for around 8 per cent of all serious injuries and 18 per cent of all fatal injuries each year. These rates have remained stable over the last decade, despite increased commercial-vehicle travel. More needs to be done, however, to encourage the consistent application of NSC standards to ensure motor vehicle carriers are safe and competitive nation-wide.

The CCMTA provides a unique environment for jurisdictions to communicate and collaborate on programs and initiatives related to road safety.

Some Canadian jurisdictions have created road safety advisory or interagency committees. Composed of government and other public and private stakeholders, these committees focus on such safety issues as sharing the road with cyclists and pedestrians, winter driving, holiday traffic congestion, and school buses. These programs may also offer awards to particularly successful initiatives.



The National Safety Code, the result of cooperation among all jurisdictions and the truck and bus industry, is helping to improve the safety performance of commercial vehicles and drivers and, by extension, the safety of all road users.



Canadian road engineers have revised national guidelines to promote safer highway design.





To curtail aggressive drivers, some jurisdictions have introduced escalating or discriminatory fines for drivers convicted of speeding in community safety zones.



Repeat drunk driving offenders now often face harsher treatment—some sentences now include 10-year and lifetime driving suspensions and vehicle impoundment.



Some jurisdictions require convicted drunk drivers to install a breath-alcohol ignition interlock as part of their relicensing program.

3. Toughening enforcement efforts

Road Safety Vision 2001 has a number of programs that recognize the importance of combining education and enforcement to remove high-risk drivers from the roads. As mentioned on page 6, the success of NORP is attributable to combined education and enforcement efforts. Another of these programs is the Strategy to Reduce Impaired Driving (STRID) 2001.

Impaired driving is a long-standing problem. Although there has been progress over the years in changing public attitudes towards driving with illegally high blood alcohol levels, a hard core of drinking drivers perpetuates this lethal mix.

STRID 2001 initiatives include comprehensive, high-impact public education and awareness programs to reduce drinking and driving. As part of STRID, police forces conduct Selective Traffic Enforcement Programs (STEP) to ferret out offenders before collisions occur. Many jurisdictions combine more active enforcement with increasing fines and harsher treatment of repeat offenders to spread the no-tolerance message on this irresponsible driving behaviour.



Increasingly, there is a no-tolerance message on drinking and driving.

4. Improving national data collection

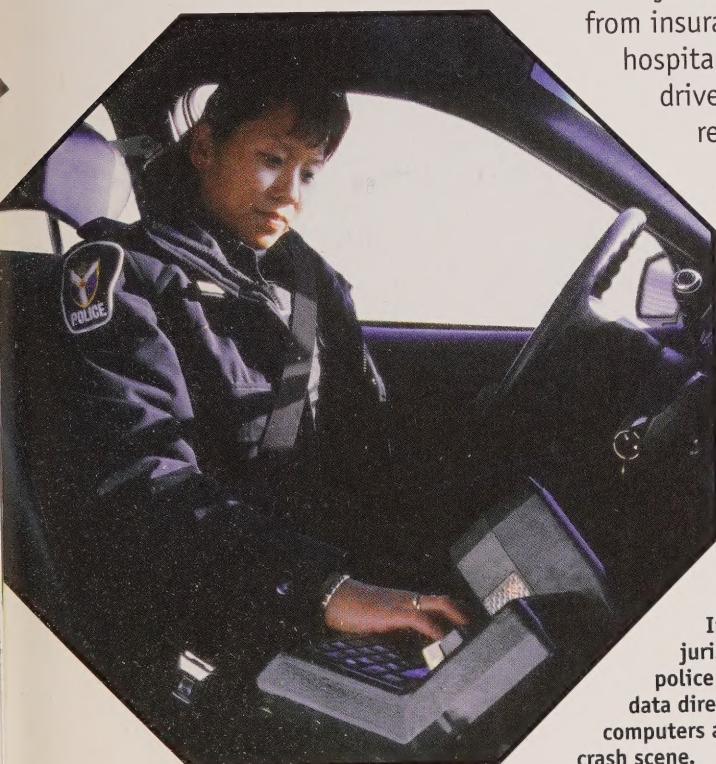
Effective road safety programs can only be designed or assessed with good data.

Some jurisdictions are testing new equipment and software to improve data input and simplify storage and retrieval. A national task force is also at work to improve data quality and compatibility and to encourage cross-jurisdictional sharing of information.

In some jurisdictions, police cruisers are equipped with computers linked to central provincial data bases. Police can input information on the offence, the vehicle and the collision location, at the crash site. More information is thereby collected on a more timely basis, is less expensive and reduces the risk of re-inputting errors. In time, these improvements will be reflected in an improved National Collision Data Base.

To better understand interrelated road safety problems, it is becoming increasingly important to link collision data with other data sources.

In some jurisdictions, data from insurance claims, hospital records, and driver and vehicle registrations is proving to be a rich source of information.



In some jurisdictions, police can enter data directly into computers at the crash scene.

More and more, data from various sources are being linked to generate more in-depth information.

Transport Canada will be conducting an annual national vehicle-use survey to monitor distances traveled and compare the risks of road travel with other modes of travel.

The more facts we have about a problem, the more likely we can understand it and come up with possible solutions.



**With your help, we can
make Canada's roads
the safest in the world.**

the next step

Cooperation and commitment are the keys to making Road Safety Vision 2001 a reality, and to working beyond the year 2001 to eradicate the epidemic of road casualties.

Canadian road safety professionals—whether designing roads, developing vehicle safety standards, enforcing laws, or creating safety programs—are the foundation for Road Safety Vision 2001. Committed to the vision, they are building a safer future for all of us.

HOW TO REACH US

To provide input on, or find out more about, national road safety programs or initiatives in your area, call Transport Canada toll free at **1-800-333-0371** or e-mail us at **roadsafetywebmail@tc.gc.ca**.



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